

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Montpelier, Vermont

TEAM: Independent & Federal Programs

ITEM: Will the State Board of Education acknowledge that the New England Association of Schools & Colleges (NEAS&C) granted accreditation to Rock Point School in Burlington, VT, to serve students in grades 9-12?

RECOMMENDED ACTION:

That the State Board of Education acknowledges that the New England Association of Schools & Colleges (NEAS&C) granted accreditation to Rock Point School in Burlington, VT, to serve students in grades 9-12. This acknowledgement is for five years, through June 30, 2013.

This acknowledgement is subject to the condition that the school immediately report to the Department of Education whenever any changes occur in enrollment, programs, policies, facilities, financial capacity, staffing, or administration, during the approval period.

STATUTORY AUTHORITY: Title 16 V.S.A. § 166(b)

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

1. Rock Point School, organized in 1928 by Episcopal Bishop Booth as a school for underprivileged girls, became a co-education day and boarding school in 1972. The mission of Rock Point School is to provide a small, supportive educational community for teenage girls and boys, where they can become successful students and learn skills for living in a community with peers and adults.
2. Rock Point School is accredited by the New England Association of Schools & Colleges (NEAS&C), which is recognized by the Vermont State Board of Education for accrediting purposes per State Board of Education Rule #7320. Rock Point School was granted continued accreditation by NEAS&C in February of 2009. The school is expected to file a Two-Year Interim Evaluation Report in April of 2011, and a five-year report in 2013 at which time the accreditation will be reviewed.
3. The State Board of Education acknowledged the school's last accreditation by the New England Association of Schools & Colleges (NEAS&C) on February 17, 2004, through June 30, 2008.

4. Rock Point School has a policy on prevention of harassment of students that is as stringent as the Department's model policy.

COST IMPLICATIONS: None

STAFF AVAILABLE:

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**DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Montpelier, Vermont**

TEAM: Independent & Federal Programs

ITEM: Will the State Board of Education grant initial general independent school approval to Rutland Area Christian School in Rutland, VT, to serve students in grades K-12?

RECOMMENDED ACTION:

That the State Board of Education grants initial general independent school approval to Rutland Area Christian School in Rutland, VT, to serve students in grades K-12. This approval is for 2 years, through June 30, 2011.

This approval is subject to the condition that the school immediately report to the Department of Education whenever any changes occur in enrollment, programs, policies, facilities, financial capacity, staffing, or administration, during the approval period.

STATUTORY AUTHORITY: Title 16 V.S.A. §166(b)

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

1. Rutland Area Christian School (RACS) is an independent, interdenominational, coeducational Christian school, operated cooperatively by an association of members. It offers pre-school, kindergarten, elementary, junior high, and high school education. The school's academic, social and spiritual growth is guided by the principles and values revealed in the Bible. RACS was founded by four couples, prior to September of 1993 when the school opened its doors. The school has operated as a Commissioner recognized independent school since its opening.
2. Rutland Area Christian School was visited on behalf of the Commissioner by Laura Glass and Pat Pallas Gray on May 12, 2009.
3. Rutland Area Christian School is located in the former Abraham Lincoln Public School Building of the Rutland City Public Schools. The original building was built in 1893 and made of brick. The addition was put on by the Rutland City Public Schools in 1965 and is made of foam board. The addition houses the primary wing, grades pre-K through 2nd, the gymnasium/stage, kitchen and school offices. The gym/stage area is used for lunch, activities, plays, gym class, and basketball games. The first floor of the original building houses the intermediate school, grades 3-6, as well as the library. The second floor of the original building houses the upper grades. The art room is located in the basement of the original building. The school is surrounded by a fenced-in playground. The school is handicapped accessible through the back door off the parking lot. Some of the classrooms

are on that level, and when needed students are taught on that level. The facilities are adequate to meet the needs of the students and meet state and federal health and safety regulations.

4. The minimum course of study, as prescribed in 16 V.S.A. §906, is provided and adapted to the age and abilities of the students. The curriculum of the school is a planned, traditional, classical curriculum carefully selected to provide a framework in which to integrate Biblical principles and to provide continuity in the learning experience. It is a logical sequence of skills and experiences; it is broad-based in scope and applies a literary, written, and verbal approval to all traditional subjects. Critical thinking and problem solving skills are an integral part of the total program. Resources to support the curriculum include a reading lab and a computer lab, a cataloged library of approximately 8,000 books, a fully-equipped science lab, and an art room. While RACS does not have an on-staff guidance counselor, when the need arises students/parents are referred to various local sources for counseling. Special education testing of students is done in conjunction with the Rutland City Public Schools and classroom accommodations are made and/or students are referred elsewhere for help. The school will serve students in grades K-10 for the 2009-2010 school year. Grade 11 will be added for the 2010/2011 school year, with the twelfth grade being added in 2011/2012. There were 80 students enrolled on the day of the visit.
5. The staff includes a pre-K and Kindergarten teacher/director; the elementary grades (1-6) are staffed with three elementary teachers, three elementary teacher's aides, and an elementary music teacher. Ten subject area teachers provide instruction in math, geography, science, social studies, English, computers, art, Bible, music and health/PE in grades seven and above. The staff is supported by a full-time principal. The staff members are qualified by degree, training, and/or experience for their positions.
6. The student health, attendance, and assessment records were reviewed and found to be in good order. Fire drills are held on a regular basis.
7. The school maintains an operating schedule that includes a total number of instructional hours each year which is not less than that required of a public school serving the same grades.
8. The school submitted financial information to verify it has the capacity to operate during the period of approval.
9. RACS has a policy on prevention of harassment that is as stringent as the Department's model policy.

COST IMPLICATIONS: none

STAFF AVAILABLE:

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State Board of Education
June 22, 2009
Item: I-3

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Montpelier, Vermont

TEAM: Independent and Federal Program

ITEM: Will the State Board of Education grant an amendment to the general and special education independent school approval for The New School of Montpelier in Montpelier, Vermont, to enable the school to serve students age 8-22?

RECOMMENDED ACTION:

That the State Board of Education grants an amendment to the general and special education independent school approval for The New School of Montpelier in Montpelier, Vermont, to enable the school to serve students age 8-22. The New School's current independent school approval period is through June 30, 2010.

Approval is subject to the condition that the school immediately report to the Department of Education whenever any changes occur in enrollment, programs, policies, facilities, financial capacity, staffing, or administration during the approval period.

STATUTORY AUTHORITY: Title 16 V.S.A. §166(b)
State Board Rule 2228 et seq

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

1. The New School is a year-round, day school designed to provide academic, social, behavioral, and therapeutic services to students identified in the disability categories of Learning Impairment, Specific Learning Disabilities, Emotional Disabilities, Other Health Impairment, Autism, Speech or Language Impairment, and Traumatic Brain Injury.
2. Renewal of general and special education independent school approval to serve students in grades 5-12, ages 10-22 was granted to The New School of Montpelier by the State Board of Education on February 21, 2006 through June 30, 2010.
3. The New School is requesting approval to serve students age 8-22. The school will meet the staffing needs for grades three and four by using current staff members, who have the qualifications and experience to provide instruction in these grades. Oak Meadow curriculum for grades three and four was purchased, and the school has curriculum resources to support this curriculum.

COST IMPLICATIONS: None

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